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DIVISION OF CHINESE AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INCOMING TELEGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/ER

ACTION COPY

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FROM: Taipei

TO : Secretary of State

NO : OP92, April 100515Z

REVIEWED BY

FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DATE

2/9/52

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STATE PASS TO DEPARTMENT OF ARMY FOR CSGID FROM ASTARMAT
TAIPEI SIGNED BARRETT.

General Sun Li-jen told Consul Strong and me following
April 9:

Making every effort reduce number "paper soldiers" in
army but this difficult as overall reduction in strength
would penalize honest commanders who have been making
correct returns, and institution individual pay card
system slow and expensive process. Has no authority make
any changes in officers above regimental commanders.
Spends only week-ends in Taipei and still concentrates
most of his attention to training which he considers his
most important duty. Expects attack of Chusan Islands
very soon.

Comment: From above and other statements by General Sun
believe his recent appointment as Commander in Chief
practically without significance. No real Commander-in-
Chief could afford devote most of his time to training.
Believe loss of Chusan Islands would have shattering effect
on civil and military morale which has been rising past
six weeks principally because of comparative inactivity
of Communists while preparing for Chusan attack, and reports
of repulsing many small attacks on Hainan which latter
probably much less unfavorable to Communists than Nationalist
Government reports claim. Coming Chusan attack may be
coordinated with attack in force on Hainan and air strike
at Taiwan but believe likelihood of former will depend upon
extent to which Communist strength in interior Hainan has
been built up. In final analysis appears main defense of
Taiwan depends on air force. Loss of Chusan Islands would
make operations by CAF over Shanghai much less effective.
Would also cause many timorous big shots on Taiwan to seek
means of fleeing and will increase danger of defections
particularly in navy and air force.

STRONG

MJF:HJC

Note: Relayed to Department of Army 4/10/50, 10:50 a.m. EKN

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NOTATION OF ACTION TAKEN.